

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TOKYO 03244 120953Z

17

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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8623

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 3244

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, JA, FR

SUBJECT: MITTERAND MAGIC IN JSP-JCP DISPUTE

SUMMARY: TOKYO'S PRESS AND GRAPEVINES REPORT THAT FRENCH SOCIALIST HEADED CALL TO TOKYO FROM YOKOHAMA'S JSP MAYOR TO SERVE AS UNGUENT IN JSP-JCP SQUABBLES. ROLE MITTERAND REALLY PLAYED IN PATCHING-UP DISPUTE IS QUESTIONABLE. END SUMMARY.

1. TOKYO PRESS REPORTED THAT FRANCOIS MITTERAND, FIRST SECRETARY OF FRENCH SOCIALIST PARTY, PLAYED MEDIATING ROLE IN RECENT JSP-JCP SQUABBLES WHICH HAD LED JSP MAYOR MINOBE EARLIER TO INSIST THAT HE WOULD NOT RUN FOR RE-ELECTION. MITTERAND, WHO VISITED JAPAN MARCH 2-5 AT INVITATION OF COUNCIL OF PROGRESSIVE CITY MAYORS, WAS RUMORED TO HAVE BEEN CALLED TO TOKYO ON SHORT NOTICE SPECIFICALLY TO PERFORM THIS ASSUASIVE TASK. (MITTERAND ALSO PAID 15-MINUTE COURTESY CALL ON PM MIKI.)

2. ROBERT GUILLAN, LE MONDE'S LONG-TIME CORRESPONDENT IN TOKYO, WHO WAS IN CONTACT WITH MITTERAND DURING HIS VISIT, DISPUTED ASPECTS OF THIS STORY. GUILLAN TOLD EMBOFF MITTERAND'S VISIT TO TOKYO HAD BEEN PLANNED FOR LONG TIME BUT THE DATE HAD BEEN ADVANCED WHEN YOKOHAMA JSP MAYOR ASUKADA, WHO
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PAGE 02 TOKYO 03244 120953Z

APPARENTLY KNEW MITTERAND WHEN ASUKADA STUDIED AT GRENOBLE

UNIVERSITY, URGENTLY REQUESTED THAT MITTERAND COME TO JAPAN IMMEDIATELY TO HELP RESOLVE THE JSP-JCP DISPUTE. MITTERAND OBLINGLY CAME AND, ACCORDING TO THE PRESS, URGED THE JSP TO EMULATE FRANCE'S SOCIALISTS AND TO ACT MORE PRAGMATICALLY AND LESS IDEOLOGICALLY. ACCORDING TO LE MONDE'S GUILLAN, MITTERAND PLANS ANOTHER VISIT TO JAPAN LATER THIS YEAR.

4. FRENCH EMBASSY COUNSELLORS (GORY AND BRUNET) BOTH TOLD POLCOUNS THEIR EMBASSY WAS INSTRUCTED TO HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH MITTERAND. THEY THEREFORE ARE UNABLE TO SHED ANY LIGHT ON THE VISIT. LOCAL MODERATE TRADE UNION OFFICIAL, COMMENTING ON JSP-JCP DISPUTE MARCH 12, REFERRED TO MITTERAND STRESS ON JSP'S NEED TO "MODERNIZE", TO BROADEN ITS GOALS BEYOND "SMALL" IDEOLOGICAL SQUABBLES, AND SAID THIS WAS ONLY INTERESTING POINT MADE BY MITTERAND BUT HE FELT STRONGLY THAT THE POINT WAS NOT MADE IN DIREC RELATION TO MINOBE'S DECISION TO RUN IN THE TOKYO ELECTION.

5. COMMENT: DESPITE PRESS PLAY AND OTHER TALK WE HAVE HEARD TO EFFECT THAT MITTERAND MEDIATED JSP-JCP SPLIT AND CLEARED WAY FOR MINOBE CANDIDACY, NO ONE SEEMS TO KNOW EXACTLY HOW THIS WAS SUPPOSEDLY ACCOMPLISHED. WE HAVE RESERVATIONS ABOUT NOTION THAT FOREIGNER, WHATEVER HIS STATUS, WOULD BE ASKED TO PLAY ROLE IN RESOLVING JSP-JCP DIFFERENCES, WITH ANY REAL EXPECTATION THAT HE COULD SUCCEED IN SUCH ENDEAVOR. OUR FEELING IS THAT MINOBE FLAP WAS ENROUTE TO RESOLUTION ANYWAY AND ANY ROLE MITTERAND PLAYED WAS AT MOST MARGINAL SO FAR AS FINAL OUTCOME WAS CONCERNED.
HODGSON

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